

Claims

We claim:

1. A method of providing programs to consumers comprising:
 - a) sending electronic program guide information through a digital television network to a digital television receiver, said electronic program guide information comprising at least one selectable program identifier for initiating a purchase transaction for an item associated with said selectable program identifier;
 - b) presenting said selectable program identifier;
 - c) responsive to a selection of said program identifier, establishing a computer communications link between said digital television receiver and at least one remote server;
 - d) downloading from said remote server at least one potential purchase transaction for a sale of said item associated with said program identifier;
 - e) presenting said potential purchase transactions; and
 - f) responsive to a selection of one of said potential purchase transactions, initiating said selected purchase transaction.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said electronic program guide information is stored in said digital television receiver and includes information associated with programs previously broadcast for a predetermined time period.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein each said potential purchase transaction is associated with a registered vendor.
4. The method of claim 1, wherein said potential purchase transactions are included within said remote server.
5. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
 - determining said potential purchase transactions by querying, through said computer communications link, a plurality of additional remote servers, wherein selected ones of said plurality of remote servers are associated with different registered vendors.

6. The method of claim 5, further comprising:
recalculating said potential purchase transactions to include a service fee.
7. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
5 receiving said selected purchase transaction at said remote server through
said computer communications link.
8. The method of claim 7, further comprising:
providing said selected purchase transaction to a registered vendor associated
10 with said selected purchase transaction via said computer communications link.
9. The method of claim 8, further comprising:
billing a consumer account for said purchase transaction.
10. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
15 presenting an electronic order form for said sale of said item associated with
said selected program identifier, and uploading said electronic order form to said
remote server via said computer communications link.
- 20 11. The method of claim 1, wherein said computer communications link is an
Internet connection.
12. The method of claim 1, wherein said item associated with said program
25 identifier is a copy of said program in a physical medium.
13. The method of claim 12, wherein said physical medium is selected from the
group consisting of compact disks, digital video disks, audio cassettes, and video
cassettes.
- 30 14. A method of providing programs to consumers comprising:
a) establishing a computer communications link between a digital
television receiver and at least one remote server;

b) downloading from said remote server electronic program guide information comprising at least one selectable program identifier for initiating a purchase transaction for an item associated with said selectable program identifier;

c) presenting said selectable program identifier;

5 d) responsive to a selection of said program identifier, downloading from said remote server at least one potential purchase transaction for a sale of said item associated with said program identifier;

e) presenting said potential purchase transactions; and

10 f) responsive to a selection of one of said potential purchase transactions, initiating said selected purchase transaction.

15 15. The method of claim 14, wherein said electronic program guide information is stored in said digital television receiver and includes information associated with programs previously broadcast within a predetermined time period.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein each said potential purchase transaction is associated with a registered vendor.

20 17. The method of claim 14, wherein said potential purchase transactions are included within said remote server.

18. The method of claim 14, further comprising:

25 determining said potential purchase transactions by querying, through said computer communications link, a plurality of additional remote servers, wherein selected ones of said plurality of remote servers are associated with different registered vendors.

19. The method of claim 18, further comprising:

30 recalculating said potential purchase transactions to include a service fee.

20. The method of claim 14, further comprising:

receiving said selected purchase transaction at said remote server through said computer communications link.

21. The method of claim 20, further comprising:
providing said selected purchase transaction to a registered vendor associated
with said selected purchase transaction via said computer communications link.

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22. The method of claim 21, further comprising:
billing a consumer account for said purchase transaction.

23. The method of claim 14, further comprising:
presenting an electronic order form for said sale of said item associated with
said selected program identifier, and uploading said electronic order form to said
remote server via said computer communications link.

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24. The method of claim 14, wherein said computer communications link is an
Internet connection.

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25. The method of claim 14, wherein said item associated with said program
identifier is a copy of said program in a physical medium.

26. The method of claim 14, wherein said physical medium is selected from the
group consisting of compact disks, digital video disks, audio cassettes, and video
cassettes.

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